

3/15/0709/HH–Extension and raising of roof to create first floor to garage and insertion of external staircase at Swiss Cottage, Widford Road, Much Hadham, SG10 6EZ for Mr R Key

Date of Receipt: 07.04.2015

Type:Householder

Parish: MUCH HADHAM

Ward: MUCH HADHAM

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be**GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T12)
2. Approved plans (2E10)

Summary of Reasons for Decision:

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies; the limited harm to the rural character of the surrounding area and the grant of planning permission under LPA reference 3/15/0156/FP, is that permission should be granted.

(070915FP.MP)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract and comprises an extended detached 1½ storey dwelling, with three front facing dormer windows, situated towards the northern boundary of the plot. There is a wide access and driveway to the front of the property that leads to a detached timber 'cartlodge' structure, located towards the southern boundary. This outbuilding is set well back from the road, albeit at a slightly elevated position. The site is reasonably well screened from the road frontage by a landscape belt of mature trees and hedgerow.
- 1.2 In March 2015, planning permission was granted for the raising of the roof of the cart lodge outbuilding and for an extension to its southern elevation. However, that permission has not been implemented and the current application proposes an amended scheme which again includes

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the provision of a roof extension and a side extension to increase the width of the building. Two front facing dormer windows are now also proposed within the roofspace, and the first floor space of the building is proposed to be used for storage purposes, accessed by an external staircase.

2.0 Site History

2.1 Various permissions have been granted for extensions to the dwelling and the outbuilding which can be summarised as follows:

3/01/0122/FP – Replacement dwelling and new vehicular access (approved with conditions);

3/01/1508/FP – Replacement garage (approved with conditions);

3/03/0339/FP – First floor rear extension and single storey side extension (approved with conditions);

3/07/0711/FP – 2 storey side extension (refused);

3/08/0022/FP – 2 storey side extension (approved with conditions);

3/15/0156/FP – Extension and first floor to existing detached garage, removal of existing store (approved with conditions). Not implemented

3.0 Consultation Responses

3.1 At the time of writing this report no consultation responses have been received.

4.0 Parish Council Representations

4.1 No comments have been received from Much Hadham Parish Council.

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 One representation from the neighbouring property has been received which raises concerns with regards to the siting of the staircase and the potential overlooking to the rear garden amenity space of the neighbouring property. Comments are also made with regards to a restriction on construction hours of working.

6.0 Policy

6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are also material considerations in this case.

7.0 Considerations

7.1 The main planning considerations in this application relate to the principle of development; the impact of the extensions on the character and appearance of the dwelling and its rural setting, and neighbour amenity impact.

Principle of development

7.2 As the site lies within the Rural Area as defined in the Local Plan, the principle of development is assessed under policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. Under part (c) of this policy, consideration is given as to whether this proposed extension can be considered as "limited" and whether it accords with the criteria of policy ENV5. The principle objective of this policy is to limit the impact an extension, including an extension to an outbuilding, may have on the character and appearance of an existing dwelling, both in itself and in relation to any adjoining dwelling and on the appearance of the locality. Whilst the principle of extending a dwelling is generally acceptable, the main concern lies with the effect of extensions on the general maintenance of a supply of smaller dwellings outside of the main towns and settlements, and also with the cumulative impact of development in the countryside.

7.3 The dwelling has been previously extended to the side and rear and planning permission was also granted for the existing garage outbuilding which this application proposes to extend. The original property had a floor area of approximately 123 square metres. Previously approved extensions and the existing outbuilding have a

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floor area of some 101 square metres. The proposed extension to the garage will therefore bring the size of the garage building and extensions more or less commensurate with the size of the original dwelling. This, in Officers opinion, does not represent a 'limited' extension, as required in policy GBC3 and ENV5.

- 7.4 Members will be aware that decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with the policies of the adopted Local Plan 'unless material considerations indicate otherwise'. It is necessary therefore to consider whether there are any other material considerations in this case which weigh in favour of the proposal such as to warrant the grant of planning permission contrary to the provisions of policies GBC3 and ENV5.
- 7.5 In this case, it is a material consideration that planning permission has recently been granted for a similar extension to the garage building, under LPA reference 3/15/0156/FP. Furthermore, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area is also a material consideration and these are discussed below:

Previous permission and impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.6 The existing garage building is a two bay structure with an attached log store in a 'lean-to' form. The proposed extensions would increase the height of the building to 4.8metres and increase the width of the building to create an additional bay (the same height and width of building as approved under LPA reference 3/15/0156/FP). The main difference between the previously approved scheme (LPA reference 3/15/0156/FP) and that now proposed is the provision of dormer windows on the front roof slope facing the road and the provision of an external staircase. This previous permission is a material consideration which weighs significantly in favour of the current proposal.
- 7.7 The resultant building proposed within this application will appear as a more significant three bay structure than the existing building and to some extent the provision of dormer windows will further increase its prominence. That said, however, the building would not be overly large in its proportions and will nevertheless appear as an ancillary building to the main dwelling. The building is elevated to the road, but is set well back from the road with a good level of screening which will help to ensure that the building is not prominent or conspicuous from the road. The materials of construction are sympathetic to the rural setting and the provision of dormer windows to the front roof slope are in keeping with the cottage type appearance of the existing dwelling which will help ensure the building assimilates with its setting.

- 7.8 Having regard to those considerations Officers do not consider that the proposed extension to the outbuilding will result in material harm to the character or appearance of the countryside setting. This also weighs in favour of the proposal.

Neighbour amenity considerations

- 7.9 Having regard to the siting of the proposed development the main consideration relates to the impact on the neighbouring property, Hornbeams.
- 7.10 Having regard to the height, siting and orientation of the extended outbuilding in relation to that neighbouring property, there will be no significant or harmful overbearing impact or loss of light/overshadowing impact from the proposed building.
- 7.11 The occupiers of the neighbouring property raise concern in regard to potential overlooking and loss of privacy associated with the external staircase. Whilst mindful of those concerns it is important to note that the staircase would be located approximately 5metres from the boundary with the neighbour and there is a significant level of intervening landscaping which will assist in obscuring views between the garage building and the neighbour. The staircase has only a very small landing area outside the solid wood door and it is considered unlikely that there would be any significant overlooking or loss of privacy impact such that would warrant the refusal of the application.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The development proposed exceeds what might be described as a 'limited' extension, and is therefore contrary to policy GBC3 of the adopted Local Plan. However, there are material considerations in this case which weigh in favour of the proposal and lead to a conclusion that planning permission should be granted.
- 8.2 Those material considerations comprise the existence of the previous permission for similar extensions to the garage outbuilding and the limited harm that would result to the character and appearance of the area. These matters are considered sufficient to allow a departure from policy. Furthermore, the proposed extension would not result in any significant harm to the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring property and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.